

On the Date of the Subhāṣitāvali

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PETERSON, in his edition of the *Subhāṣitāvali*, wrote in 1886¹ : “ Of the compiler [of the anthology] all we can say is that he cannot have flourished before Jainollābhadīna [i.e. Zain ul-‘Ābidīn], whose date is given by Cunningham as A.D. 1417–67.” Aufrecht places Vallabhadeva, the compiler of this important Sanskrit anthology, in the sixteenth century A.D., on the ground that Vallabhadeva has laid the *Śārṅgadhara-paddhati* under contribution in compiling his anthology.² With this view Winternitz seems to agree.³

The reference to Vallabhadeva and his *Subhāṣitāvali*, however, by Vandyaghaṭīya Sarvānanda in his *Ṭīkā-sarvasva* on the lexicon of Amara⁴ appears to conflict with the date conjectured by Peterson and Aufrecht. Commenting on the alternative forms *javā* and *japā*, Sarvānanda points out⁵ that a pun based on the possibility of these two forms is to be found in a verse in the *Subhāṣitāvali* of the Kāśmīra-Vallabhadeva : *kāśmīra-vallabhadeva-racita-subhāṣitāvalyām api pakārānta-śleṣaḥ, tathā ca*

madanam avalokya niṣphalam anityatām api [ca] bandhu-jīvānām |

vanam upagamya bhramaraḥ samprati jāto japāsaktaḥ ||

This verse actually occurs anonymously as No. 726 of the *Subhāṣitāvali*,⁶ and there can be hardly any doubt as to the correctness of the attribution. It is clear, therefore, that this anthology was known to Sarvānanda, and his date should

¹ Introduction, p. 114.

² *Catalogus Catalogorum*, i, p. 555a. This date is not justifiable in itself, as the *Śārṅgadhara-paddhati* was compiled about A.D. 1363.

³ *Geschichte der ind. Lit.*, iii, p. 158.

⁴ Ed. Trivandrum Sansk. Ser. 1914–17.

⁵ Pt. ii, kāṇḍa ii, varga 4, p. 130.

⁶ The reading slightly varies. In the second *pāda* there is, before *bandhu*°, a *ca*, which is required by the metre (as restored by us). In the third *pāda*, instead of *vanam*, the reading in the anthology is *gurum*.

give us the lower terminus to its date. Sarvânanda himself gives us a clue as to the time when his commentary was actually composed. Commenting on the passage *daive yuga-sahasre dve brāhmaṇa*,¹ he states : *idānīm caikāśīti-varṣādhika-sahasraika-paryantena śakābda-kālena ṣaṣṭi-varṣādhika-dvicitvāriṃśacchatāni kali-sandhyāyā bhūtāni*. In other words, the Śaka-year 1081 and the Kali-year 4260 had passed away at the moment he was writing.² This would give us A.D. 1160 as the date of Sarvânanda's commentary.³

¹ Kāla-varga, śl. 21 (Pt. i, kāṇḍa i, varga 4, pp. 90-1).

² In the copy of Sarvânanda's commentary noticed by Seshagiri Sastri (Report, 1893-4, No. 2, p. 26), this reference to *Kāśmīra-Vallabhadeva-racita-Subhāṣitāvali* also occurs; but relying on Peterson's date, Seshagiri Sastri places Sarvânanda between A.D. 1417 and 1431, the last date being obtained by the latter's priority to Rāyamukuta (p. 24). But the learned Śāstri appears to have overlooked this passage bearing on the date of the commentary. The other Vallabha cited by Sarvânanda (Pt. ii, pp. 23, 350) is obviously the well-known scholiast Vallabha, who belonged to the first half of the tenth century and wrote commentaries on the standard *mahākāvyas*; for Sarvânanda's citations contain a reference to his commentaries on *Śiśupāla*° and *Kumāra*°.

³ No fact has yet come to light which would make us doubt or dispute the authenticity of this date given by Sarvânanda himself. He appears to quote no author who is known to be of a later date than the middle of the twelfth century. This date may be corroborated by another fact. Sarvânanda calls himself *vandyaghaṭīyārṭihara-putra*. The word *vandyaghaṭī* is well known in Bengal as connected with the name of the village from which Vandyā or Vandyaghaṭīya Brahmans take their name. We need not take the explanation of Mm. Haraprasād Śāstri (appended in a note to Seshagiri's Report cited above) that it denotes a person who has married a girl of superior status; for it is probably here a proper name, Sarvânanda describing himself as the son of one Ārṭihara. The name actually occurs in the form of Atihara or Ātihara in the genealogical table of Vandyaghaṭī Brahmans given in Hari Miśra's *Kārikā* (quoted in Nagendranāth Vasu's *Vaṅger Jātīya Itihāsa*, p. 138). It must also be noted that Ātihara's brother's son Vāmana received (according to these *Kula-paṇjikās*) *kula-maryādā* from Ballālasena (op. cit., p. 142, f.n.), one of whose known dates is A.D. 1160. This date coincides happily with that given by Sarvânanda. It is curious, however, that the name of Ātihara's son is not recorded in these genealogical accounts. This is somewhat puzzling; but possibly it may be explained by the not unlikely supposition that as Sarvânanda left Bengal for the distant South (where alone his work has been preserved, and not in Bengal), no account either of him or his family was known or kept in the genealogical books compiled in Bengal for purposes of social reference. Mr. Nagendranāth Vasu, however, makes a mistake (op. cit., p. 198, f.n.) when he identifies our author with a much later and better known Sarvânanda, whose father's name is given as Digambara.

Vallabhadeva's anthology, therefore, must be presumed to have been either contemporaneous with or composed before this date.

Let us now see if there is anything in the data furnished by the *Subhāṣitāvali* itself which would conflict with this conclusion. Of a large number of authors cited in this anthology, we possess no authentic information ; but those about whom our knowledge is more definite can be grouped into three classes : (1) Those who flourished before the date proposed by us, i.e., before, say, A.D. 1150 ; (2) those who were contemporaneous with this date ; and (3) those who may be supposed to have lived after this date. We need not consider the first of these groups. Of the second group, i.e., of those authors who are known or conjectured to have lived about the middle of the twelfth century, the names of Jayadeva, Maṅkha, Śrīharṣa, Kalhaṇa, Hemâcārya, Jenduka, and Kalyāṇadatta are notable. The four verses of Jayadeva in this anthology are taken from his *Gīta-govinda* ; of the thirty-three verses of Maṅkha, about thirty can be traced in his *Śrīkaṇṭha-carita* ; and almost all of the seventy-seven verses of Śrīharṣa, who is generally cited with the designation *naiṣadhakarṭṛ*, are found in his well-known poem. In the same way, almost all the verses of Kalhaṇa in this anthology are traceable in his *Rāja-taraṅgiṇī*.¹ There is, therefore, no doubt as to the identity of these authors. It is not clear, however, if Hemâcārya is the famous Jaina teacher and versatile writer Hemacandra ; for only one verse of this author is quoted, and it is difficult to locate it in the voluminous writings of the industrious Jaina polygrapher. The case is much the same with Jenduka and Kalyāṇadatta, for it is not clear if they are identical with the poets of the same name² mentioned by Maṅkha as his contemporaries. While

Peterson identifies most of these citations. No. 1517, which is not found in *Naiṣadha*, occurs anonymously in *Kavindra-vacana-samuccaya* as No. 206 and is probably wrongly attributed to Śrīharṣa.

¹ Maṅkha (*Śrīkaṇṭha*° xxv, 71-2) calls him Jinduka.

one verse of each of these poets (not traceable anywhere) is given in this anthology, we possess no information about them (except what Mañkha tells us) which would help us in supporting this suggested identification. Even if these identifications of Peterson be presumed, the resulting conclusion would not make any difference. The citation of contemporary authors need not by itself present any chronological difficulty ; for it is not unreasonable to assume that in compiling an anthology Vallabhadeva aimed at being up to date by including quotations from contemporary poets, most of whom were perhaps already famous and some of whom were undoubtedly Kashmirians.¹

The third group of poets cited, i.e., those who may be supposed to have lived considerably later than the twelfth century, may again be classed into two groups : (a) those whose identity cannot be taken as clearly established, and (b) those who can be identified with some amount of certainty. In the first of these groups fall Amṛtadatta (with the honorific title *bhāgavata*) and Arjunadeva. Peterson suggests that Amṛtadatta was a court-poet of Shihāb ud-Dīn, whom he places, on the authority of Cunningham, in A.D. 1335 ; while he proposes to identify Arjunadeva with the Paramāra Prince Arjunavarmadeva, who lived in the first half of the thirteenth century and wrote a commentary² on the *Amaru-śataka*, in which he refers to Muñja Vākpatirāja as his predecessor. It is difficult to accept these identifications in the absence

¹ Contemporary quotations are not unusual in anthologies, as instances of it are not rare in *Śārṅgadharma-paddhati* and *Sadukti-karṇāmṛta*. The probability or fact that some of these authors lived beyond the middle of the twelfth century into another decade or two is of no serious consequence to our conclusion. Sarvānanda's reference to a contemporary anthology, again, need not be taken as unusual in a technical treatise. Thus Ruyyaka quotes in his *Alaṃkāra-sarvasva* (ed. Kāvya-mālā, 35, p. 93) from Kalhaṇa (*Rāja-tara*°, iv, 441), which work was not completed till A.D. 1150, as well as from *Śrīkaṇṭha-carita* of his own pupil Mañkha, written about A.D. 1145. In a lexicon, as in a work on poetics or grammar, such utilization of "modern" works is not out of place but really admirable.

² Ed. Kāvya-mālā 18, Bombay, 1916.

of sufficient data. The verse No. 609 in the *Subhāṣitāvali*, attributed to Amṛtadatta, is explained in the verse which immediately precedes it (No. 608) as Shihāb ud-Dīn's challenge to an intending invader of Kashmir. From this Peterson concludes that Amṛtadatta was one of the court-poets of Shihāb ud-Dīn. But no work of Amṛtadatta, except a few verses in the anthologies, is known to exist; and the evidence of the anthologies and later citations is not consistent, but points to an earlier date. One of Amṛtadatta's verses cited in the *Subhāṣitāvali* (No. 43) is also given anonymously in the *Kavīndra-vacana-samuccaya* (No. 31); but this latter anthology quotes no other poet who is known to be of a later date than A.D. 1000.¹ Amṛtadatta has, again, a verse in *Sadukti-karṇāmṛta* (ed. *Bibl. Ind.*, p. 147) in which he extols the beauty of the ladies of Uttarāpatha. The date of this anthology is known to be A.D. 1206. It is also noteworthy that the verse No. 43 of Amṛtadatta is cited anonymously by Mammāṭa, who himself is quoted by Vallabhadeva and who cannot be placed later than the end of the eleventh century.² All these facts would throw doubt on the identification proposed by Peterson and render a revision of Amṛtadatta's date necessary. Of Arjunadeva, only one verse (No. 1822) is quoted in the *Subhāṣitāvali*, and it cannot be traced in the only known commentary of Arjunavarmadeva, with whom Peterson seeks to identify him. There are hardly any available data which would justify this identification, which must still be regarded as a mere conjecture.

Greater difficulty is presented by those authors who can be identified with some amount of probability or certainty with authors who are known to have lived after the twelfth century. These are Rājānaka Jonarāja and Śrī-Bakapaṇḍita. The title *rājānaka* of the former would indicate that Jonarāja was probably a Kashmirian; but there is

¹ Thomas, Introduction, p. 16.

² See my *Sanskrit Poetics*, i, pp. 158 f.

no other evidence ¹ which would enable us to identify him definitely with Jonarāja who is known to have continued the *Rāja-taraṅgiṇī* and lived in Kashmir in the reign of Zain ul-‘Ābidīn in the beginning of the fifteenth century. One Śrī-Baka is mentioned in Śrīvara’s continuation of the *Rāja-taraṅgiṇī*, and is known to have flourished in the reign of the prince named above. The verse No. 2633 of the *Subhāṣitāvali* explains that No. 2632 was composed by Śrī-Baka for the delectation of Zain ul-‘Ābidīn. This somewhat pedestrian verse, however, is composed in the ordinary *anuṣṭubh*-metre, and is couched in a strange form which introduces the poet in the first person :

śrī-jainollābhadīnārthaṃ śloko’yaṃ cātu-miśritah |
śrī-bakena mayākāri vāride hima-vārṣiṇi ||.

The genuineness of these references to historical personages cannot be doubted ; but it is not clear if these verses have not found their way into the anthology at some later time. If we are to rely on Sarvānanda’s date and his citation of the anthology and its compiler, there is no other alternative but to regard these verses as later interpolations into the work. From Peterson’s own account in the Preface, it is evident that the *Subhāṣitāvali* was much studied in Kashmir ; and the first MS. of the work, which he received from Pandit Durgāprasād, is described by him as being the one which the Pandit “ had himself used when a pupil in Kashmir ”. In an anthology which was in current use, it could not have been difficult to interpolate at a later time verses of contemporary authors relating to well-known princes. This may be suspected from the fact that Peterson’s manuscript *C* interpolates verses which are not found in *A*, *B*, and *D*, and which Peterson himself believes to be inconsistent with what he considers to have been the original text. This suspicion gains support also from the readings of the South Indian

¹ None of the three verses attributed to Jonarāja by Vallabhadeva are traceable in Jonarāja’s continuation of the *Rāja-taraṅgiṇī*.

MS. of the *Subhāṣitāvali* referred to by Ramakrishna Kavi,¹ which gives verses and names not traceable, or ascribed to different authors, in the printed edition of the text.

We may now summarize what we have tried to discuss above in this way :—

(1) Peterson had good reasons to assign the *Subhāṣitāvali* to a date not earlier than the fifteenth century from the reference in one of the verses to Zain ul-‘Ābidīn, and from the probability that some of the poets included were contemporaneous with that prince.

(2) But Sarvānanda undoubtedly knew this anthology, which he cites and quotes from, along with the name of the compiler.

(3) Sarvānanda gives the date of his commentary (in which this citation occurs) as A.D. 1160.

(4) There is no reason (apart from the conflict with the accepted date of the *Subhāṣitāvali*) to doubt or dispute this date given by Sarvānanda of his own commentary.

(5) If we are to accept the limit supplied by Sarvānanda’s date, we must consider all references to or verses of later authors or personages in the anthology as interpolations.

(6) Sarvānanda’s reference in A.D. 1160 to the *Subhāṣitāvali* and its author, and his quotation from it, supply the lower limit to its date, and do not justify such a late date for the anthology as the fifteenth century assigned by Peterson.

(7) The quotation in this anthology from poets who lived about A.D. 1150 makes it probable that it could not have been compiled very far from this date.

¹ Preface to *Avantisundarī-kathā*, p. 4; Preface to *Caturbhāṣī*, pp. ii, iv. The MS. copy of the *Subhāṣitāvali* mentioned in the *Report of the Working of the Peripatetic Party of the Govt. Oriental MSS. Library, Madras, during 1916–19* (p. 40), does not contain the name of the compiler, and appears to be a different work.